

Metropolitan Police Special Demonstration Squad targeting of Stoke Newington police accountability campaigns: 1981 - 1999

Graham Smith, founder of Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA)

Hackney History Festival, 11 May 2025

Online references to [Undercover Policing Inquiry](#) (UCPI) documents referred to in the talk (in sequence referred to, not chronologically)

Background

Developing out of the Trevor Monerville Campaign and describing itself as a self-help group for victims of police crime, HCDA was set up in July 1988. Active until 1995, it was first based at Hackney Council for Racial Equality's Rectory Road Family Centre, and when that closed down in 1992 HCDA set up the Colin Roach Centre (CRC) with Hackney Trade Union Support Unit.

Between 1989 and 1993 HCDA investigated 381 cases involving Hackney and Stoke Newington police officers. Over half (n=200) involved persons of African Caribbean heritage. Assault cases were the highest category investigated (n=131), and 79.3% of victims had to defend themselves against criminal charges. In 1992, after announcement by the MPS of an anti-corruption enquiry codenamed Operation Jackpot into allegations of drug dealing by Stoke Newington police officers, HCDA conducted a parallel investigation. A total of 90 allegations against Stoke Newington CID officers between December 1988 and November 1992, primarily fabrication of evidence associated with the planting of drugs, were investigated. Of 77 drugs related prosecutions, 70% (n=54) were unsuccessful either as a result of no evidence offered, jury acquittal or appeal against conviction. HCDA supported 83 civil claims against the CPM arising from its caseload, over 20% of the total.

After HCDA ceased to be active the CRC continued its work supporting victims of police injustice until it closed in 1999.

Because of the efforts of '[Alison](#)' it was known before the UCPI commenced that [DC Mark Jenner](#) had [spied on the CRC](#). The extent of SDS interest in Stoke Newington campaigns was not known..

UCPI documents

1. Special Branch report '[Political Extremism and the Campaign for Police Accountability within the Metropolitan Police District](#)': 24 January 1983.
A secret report partly based on SDS officer reports on Greater London Council and London borough police committees, their support units and police accountability campaigns.
2. SDS officer report '[Black People Against State Harassment](#)': 25 March 1981.
First report disclosed targeting a campaign based at the Rectory Road Family Centre.
3. SDS officer report '[March called for by Hackney Black Peoples Association and Hackney Legal Defence Committee](#)': 10 December 1981.
March in support of Mrs Nellie Knight and daughters Jennifer and Janice, assaulted by Stoke Newington police officers and acquitted of assault police charges in 1982.
4. SDS officer report '[Private meeting of the Organising Committee of the Roach Family Support Committee](#)': 2 February 1983.
First report disclosed on the RFSC.
5. SDS 1983 '[Annual Report](#)' (Paragraph 34): 29 May 1984.
RFSC analysed as part of the Revolutionary Communist Group.
6. Security Service note of '[SDS meeting re targeting Hackney/Stoke Newington](#)': 24 August 1983.
On importance of Family Centre to black groups and police accountability campaigns.
7. SDS officer report on the '[Trevor Monerville Campaign](#)': 13 March 1987.
Only report disclosed on the TMC: filed by Special Branch under the Socialist Workers Party.
8. SDS officer report on '[HCDA 'Fighting the Lawmen' public meeting](#)': 13 October 1992.
DC Trevor Morris report of a forthcoming public meeting on the Stoke Newington drug scandal.
9. [UCPI DS Trevor Morris hearing transcript](#) (pages 9-13): 1 August 2024.
Morris claims he was given access to HCDA case files.